



Behemoth:

• Rock Lake, Wisconsin: Fortean Times 57, p.42, has an interesting report on 19th century sightings of a lake monster in Wisconsin. As I have already mentioned several times in Bilk, Rock Lake also houses two sunken pyramids, a kind of inland Atlantis. Here we have the dragon again, guarding sunken treasure. Walter Langbein, who proposes the Rock Lake Pyramids were built by Ancient Astronauts, repeats an earlier article of his on this topic in a booklet called "Mythen und Wirklichkeiten", which appeared in February published by Georg Schulz of Bremen. I have an article on Ufos and Sea monsters in it as well, which is based on my series for the INFO Journal.

● Exhibition: Sheila O. Barrera currently has an exhibition of her artwork showing lake monsters, from June 30 to Sept 4, at Les Malamut Art Gallery, Union Public Library, in Union, New Jersey. Perhaps some of my American readers might be interested in this one. Sheila has sent me samples of her artwork, it is what we here call "naive art", nice and colourful settings with fairy tales sea monsters.

● Nicaragua. At El Palicio pond near Matagalpa, fishermen saw a "large hairy agile humanoid" emerge from the water in August 1990. Some witnesses said he had horns, others observed a "snake with a very broad

head" - so what are we dealing with here? An aquatic, unidentified ape as the ones suggested by Loren Coleman in his Curious Encounters? An aquatic Bigfoot? A lake monster? Or a vision of the devil? Or - and I wonder why nobody has suggested this so far - an alien from outer space? Fortean folklore tends to merge motifs, in this case, the devil, the merman and the lake monster. The Locals believed it was one of their goblins, by the way (Fortean Times 57, p.23).

• Bibliography: - Meurger on modern reports of Orkney merman (Fortean Times 57, p.23). - Orinoco merman (Strange 7, p.57). - An opera based on the European Melusine tradition, composed by Aribert Reimann (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 24 May, p.35). - An interpretation of the Pascagoula Ufo and the two creatures in it as a big fish with mermaids and the eye of God in the very interesting anthology by Dennis Stillings: Cyberbiological Studies of the Imaginal Component in the UFO Contact Experience (St Paul MN: Archaeus Project 1989: 108 - 124). This book has much of interest for forteans and cryptozoologists, and I find the method of Jungian interpretation of fortean events yields valuable insights into the meaning of the experience.

LEVIATHAN:

• Turtle rescues: In the last Bilk, following a recent account of a giant turtle that rescued a fisherman, I promised I would present earlier variations of this tale.

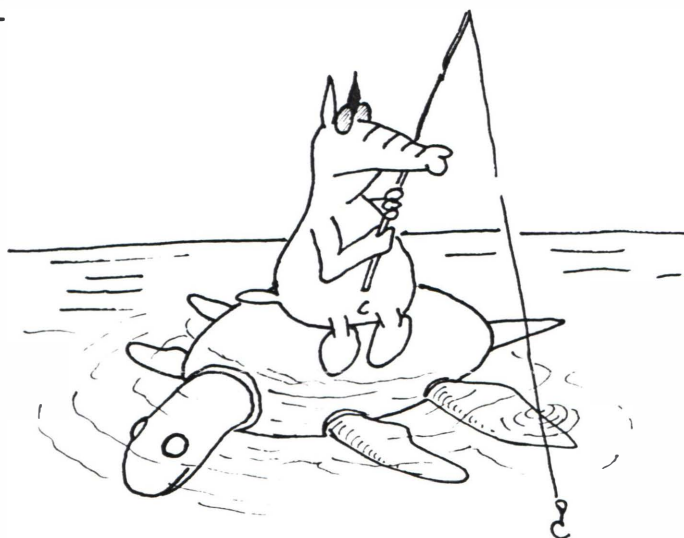
Now, here they are: one was mentioned in Fortean Times 53, p. 18, and Bilk 30, from May 1989, off the Philippines. Two still earlier versions are mentioned in Rickard/Michell's Living Wonders (German edition, p. 221), one from June 1974, also from the Philippines (which I have from the Süddeutsche Zeitung, 2 June 1974), and one from August 25, 1969, off Central America (I think I have a clipping for this, but I can't find it right now). Do giant

marine turtles rescue Philippine fishermen on a global level, or is this only marine foaflore? I also recall that in some eastern cosmologies, the world lies on the back of a holy turtle.

• Strange Whales: Michel Raynal has sent me an important article of his, from the journal "Aquatic Mammals", 17.1, 31-36. Co-authored with Jean-Pierre Sylvestre, he looks into sightings and folktales of whales with two dorsal fins, some of the material taken from Heuvelmans sea serpent book. They list following reports: 1814, Rafinesque-Schmalz; 1819, Quoy and Gaimard; 1857, Jonathan Couch; 1867, E. H. Giglioli; 1898 Lily, 1983, Mediterranean Sea. The 1898 Lily report rather refers, I believe, to a basking shark, like 40 % of all Scottish sea serpent stories, but Raynal and Sylvestre no doubt have established a good case for a real-life whale with two dorsal fins.

• Fiji Islands: Some Bिल्ks ago, I mentioned that the carcasses of three "prehistoric animals" had been videotaped in an underwater cave in Fiji. Now several fortean publications have different press reports on this case, but from the info I now have it is still difficult to evaluate the affair. Perhaps some enterprising cryptozoologist will analyse the tape, or, better still, get the creatures. Clippings on the Fiji sea monsters can be found in Strange 7, p.42, and Science Frontiers 75 (May-June 1991), p.2.

• Bibliography: - Strange 7, p.48, revealed -almost as if it were universally known- in a review of a book on scientific hoaxes that the three sea serpent sightings reported by the Mauretania in 1934 at the heyday of the Loch Ness monster, were press hoaxes. That is new to me, but hardly surprising, as in 1933/34, I have found 150 British sea serpent sightings, almost one every 4 days - and most



sounded suspiciously like hoaxes, though I'd guess some 80 % of the overall reports were easily identifiable as sharks, whales, and in one case - barnacles! Heuvelmans was able to conventionally identify one of these hoaxed creatures, which again shows that you cannot apply "scientific cryptozoology" to fiktion and folklore. Cryptozoologists should read more Ufo-literature just to realize the size of mistaken identity cases and the heavy emotional and image-distorting retelling of such experiences. - On May 28, German TV showed an American movie of 1965, directed by Andrew Marton, called Around the world under the sea. This movie had a sea serpent attack on a submarine as one of the special effects, it was rather poorly executed with a model-sub and a muraena.

KRAKEN:

- Film taken! My TV-magazine (Gong, Nr. 24, 1991) had a short description of the documentary "Abenteuer Forschung" which was said to include a programme on "Giant squids. A camera crew found a giant squid with an arm span of nearly 7 metres. Is the 'devil fish' really dangerous?". This is all, but it appears that a giant squid has actually been filmed - I could give you more infos, but the scheduled date of the documentary (June 20) also saw the heated debate in the Federal Diet on the future capital of Germany (which will be Berlin), and so, the documentary was not shown...
- "First Jaws, now Beast", runs a news story in the Saudi Gazette of June 3, p.16: "New York, Sun. (AP) Almost 20 years after Peter Benchley's Jaws kept some people away from the beaches, the author has created a fictional 100-foot-long (35 metres) squid that makes the great white shark seem relatively innocuous. 'This animal is off the scale', Benchley told USA Weekend about Beast a novel due out next month. Squids live in deep water off the East coast and can grow to 50 feet (17 metres). Beast raises environmental questions about out-of-balance oceans in which sperm whales, the giant squid's only predator, have been thinned by commercial whaling". If this novel makes more people aware of the ongoing slaughter of Whales, it will be a good thing. And, who knows, perhaps we will also get an increase in big squid reports, or even our first lake-architeuthis stories.
- England: The Rheinpfalz (May 28) has a Reuter report on an invasion of the British Channel by octopi. It says dangerous octopi pest the "oily waters" and refers to this proliferation of "Kraken", as octopi are called in German, as their third population explosion. I seem to recall similar news stories last year, but it were monster octopuses then (I think there was one monster octopus story from that time in one of the last Fortean Times as well) - Read your old Bilks and you get the full story. The Rheinpfalz report was also in the Süddeutsche Zeitung, May 29, p.64p.

USOS:

- Ghost ship: On May 12, the German TV channell ZDF had a programme called "Abenteuer und Legenden: Mit Rolf Pflücke an der Magellanstraße". Pflücke rode on horseback through Patagonia, visiting the fjords and icy lakes and desolated pampa. One ranchero, while they were riding to Chiloe Island, told him the story of the Caleuche (which is also mentioned in Neurger's Lake Monster Traditions). The Caleuche is an ancient sailing ship which only appears (briliantly lighted) when the wind is still and the sea calm. Whoever sees it will be drawn into the open sea, even against his or her will and has to drown. As the farmer pointed out, thousands of people have already seen the ship. Now, if those who see it must drown, who reports the sightings? The Caleuche, like the Kraken and the sea serpent and the mermain, and myths rationalizing and explaining why people drown. I quoted a similar ghost ship legend from Amazonia in my INFO article. This ghost ship was able to transform into a sea serpent, by the way, something not known of the Caleuche.
- Light Wheel: According to a report in the Peiner Allgemeine Zeitung of January 26, 1979, reprinted in the CENAP Report May 1991, p.26, "in October 1977 the Soviet scientific vessel 'Vladimir Vorobiov'

encountered a circle of light in the Indian Ocean. It had a diameter of 150 to 200 metres and was emitted by an unidentified object 20 metres below. The sea was 200 metres deep at the point. The whole crew of the ship suffered from depression and anxieties after the encounter. Their report was submitted to the section for underwater sciences of the Institute of Oceanology." Here, once again, we have one of the underwater lightwheels, a rare natural phenomenon. Fort collected some 20, and in the 1960s, a German scientist published some 150 stories. Since then, I've been able to add a dozen more from own research (one sighting appeared in the Times in 1936 or around) and Science Frontiers.

● Bibliography: meteor falls into the sea off Land's End, Cornwall, in February 1910, see Fortean Times 57. Myself on Ufos, USOs and sea serpent and how they might all be different interpretations of the same natural phenomena or processes in the brain, see note in the Behemoth section. CENAP Report June 91, p.33, has a story on the "First World UFO Congress" in Tucson, Arizona, in May 91. One of the speakers scheduled was one Swedish named Helge, who was abducted and brought to an alien submarine base off the Bahamas. Funnily enough, in my book on abductions (due in September) I pointed out that belief in the Bermuda Triangly myth early in the 1970s supported indirectly the notion that Ufos do abduct humans, and now I see both myths linked so simply by a clever contactee... If you recall how humanoids often appear frog-like or have webbed fingers, you realize that the whole Bermuda Trinagle/ abduction/ unidentified submarines-business has a direct meaning for what simple minds like to call "research into unknown aquatic creatures". Alas, it's not that simple, and we enter a complex system of myths, folklore, irrational beliefs, salesmanship and sometimes real phenomena when we research "water monsters" - whatever they are.

CRYPTOZOOLOGY:

● If I seem to lean heavily on the opinion side this Bilk, it is ~~why~~ because I have so many interconnected data. But now, even though it interests me only marginally, some strait cryptozoological news:

- yeti: According to a report in the Gong, Nr. 22, 1991, p. 12, a female reporter of the ZDF will accompany Italian mounteneer Reinhold Messner on his planned expedition to find and prove the yeti. The report is very badly written, it appears that on May 13 (1992?) Messner will go to Bhutan to film a yeti.

- Tasman tiger: A report in the Rheinpfalz on June 11 says that a cab driver in Tasmania saw one of the creatures and police have started a search for the poor thing. Rather naively, and unaware of the long tradition of such sightings, the AP story concludes that the thylacine is not extinct, as had been thought before. I hope the wolf is still alive, and if it is, it will not be peated by journalists and tourists.

MARINE LIFE:

● A French tanker collided with a whale in the Atlantic Ocean. The 20 tonnes carcasses was unnoticed until the ship came into Nantes harbour. Shows you something about modern shipping! (Rheinpfalz, May 15).

NEW MAGAZINE:

Gerry Lovell, 8 St. John Street, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1SW, England, now exchanges "Annals of the Enquiring" with Bilk. Annals are a 24-page mag full with tiny notes on fortean happenings, little of them really new and many from the fortean books. I regret that sources are seldom given. Vol 2, 2 has reports on the Valhalla sea serpent (p. 16) and the African dinosaur (p.19). As the one I have is the only issue I know, I can't really judge, but with sources given and new and newly researched material instead of the old stories we all know from the sensational fortean bestsellers, this could be a very good addition to the fortean literature.

4 pages of BILK should be more than you can stand (when I think of all the typos... but then, I do it in my free time and sometimes quickly), so I come back in September. Have your sciccors ready when you read the paper and enjoy the summer.